February 1, 2019

The Honorable Wilbur Ross  
Secretary of Commerce  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to request that you immediately terminate the current agreement suspending the outstanding antidumping investigation on fresh tomatoes from Mexico.

Congress has enacted U.S. laws targeting unfair trade practices for the specific purpose of ensuring that American farmers, workers, and companies are not injured as a result of systematic abuses by foreign producers. The record is clear in this case: the suspension agreements negotiated by past Administrations have not worked, and Mexican tomato exporters have used successive suspension agreements as cover for their continued use of unfair trade practices to gain U.S. market share at the expense of the domestic tomato industry.

Since the first tomato suspension agreement was enacted in 1996, hundreds of U.S. tomato growers across the country have been forced out of business. Mexico’s share of the U.S. tomato market has increased from 32 to 54 percent, while the share for U.S. growers has fallen from 65 to 40 percent. Since 2002, imports of Mexican tomatoes have skyrocketed 125 percent and U.S. production has declined 34 percent. Small family operations have been particularly hard hit, and the production losses reverberate beyond agriculture to deeply impact rural economies and land development patterns. The industry will continue to shrink if the status quo is maintained.

We appreciate your team’s efforts to attempt to renegotiate improved terms. However, Mexican exporters have shown no interest in accepting a suspension agreement that would close the loopholes that permit them to continue dumping tomatoes and injuring American tomato growers and packers. Such suspension agreements have always been negotiated with the best intentions in mind. Yet, three different agreements have already been negotiated over the last 22 years because each previous agreement had failed to work as intended.

Rather than renegotiate the terms of the current, ineffective agreement with Mexican exporters who have thus far demonstrated their unwillingness to deal in good faith, we instead request that you use your authority to immediately terminate the agreement suspending the outstanding antidumping investigation on fresh tomatoes from Mexico.

Sincerely,

Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator

Ted S. Yoho  
D.V.M.  
Member of Congress
Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Al Lawson
Member of Congress

Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress

Fred Upton
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress

Austin Scott
Member of Congress

Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

Michael Waltz
Member of Congress

Ross Spano
Member of Congress

Drew Ferguson
Member of Congress

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress

Mike D. Rogers
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress

Mark Meadows
Member of Congress